

bought goods to residents in the interior; delivered raw materials to the factories; and distributed finished products to outlets throughout the region. Businesses along the canal included food packing companies, rubber reclaiming plants, distilleries, coal yards, quarries, lumberyards, pharmaceuticals, terra cotta, wallpaper manufacturers, farms and many more.

According to canal historians, 1866 was the canal's peak year, when almost three million tons of cargo were shipped through the waterway—more tonnage than was carried in any single year on the much longer and more famous Erie Canal.

During three wars, the Civil War, World War I and World War II, the Delaware and Raritan Canal carried men and materials between the ports of New York and Philadelphia.

In 1973, several coalitions in New Jersey sought and secured a place on the National Register of Historic Places for the Delaware and Raritan Canal. One year later, the canal became the centerpiece of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park. Since then, the Canal Society of New Jersey and the D&R Canal Watch have worked tirelessly to preserve and protect the canal's rich history for generations to come.

Today the Delaware and Raritan Canal serves New Jerseyans as a tranquil ribbon of green, connecting our historic past with recreational opportunities that are enjoyed by so many.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF ELIJAH PAT LARKINS

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and achievements of my dear friend and a widely-respected leader, the Honorable Elijah Pat Larkins, who died February 14, 2009 after losing a 16-month battle with brain cancer. My thoughts and prayers are with his family at this most difficult time. I hope that Pat's family takes comfort in knowing that, in his over 66 years on this earth, he had a profound impact on those around him, making significant contributions to the lives of so many Floridians.

Pat had an affinity with South Florida that was developed over a lifetime. He was born in Pompano Beach in 1942, and graduated from Blanche Ely High School in 1960. In 1962 he left Tennessee State University without graduating to pursue a career as a housing director for the local community action agency. In 1969, he was one of only two Florida recipients of a Ford Foundation fellowship to attend the National Housing Institute in Washington, DC. He worked in Illinois for a brief period immediately following his certification by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a housing development specialist. Returning to Florida, Pat created the Broward County Minority Builders Coalition and was a director of his own not-for-profit business, Malar Construction Inc. in Ft. Lauderdale.

Madam Speaker, Pat had a long career in public service, and it is through this aspect of his life that he has had the greatest impact on

the lives of so many in South Florida. He was the first chairperson of the City of Pompano Beach Community Development Committee. In 1982, he was the second African-American elected to the Pompano Beach City Commission. He was just the eighth African-American local elected official in Broward County and served 19 consecutive years as city commissioner. In that time, he served a record seven terms as mayor, the first African American to hold this post, and three terms as vice-mayor. He also served an unprecedented 14 consecutive years on the Broward County Planning Council and was the first African-American chair of that body. After an unsuccessful run for Broward County Commission in 2001, Pat Larkins was reelected to the Pompano Beach City Commission in 2003 where he served as vice-mayor.

I am sure that my colleagues would agree that this is a remarkable list of achievements. Importantly, however, Pat was known not only for the offices that he held but the means by which he discharged his duties in those offices. Pat was a man of uncompromising integrity. He possessed an incredible generosity of spirit, and was a mentor to those around him. Pat has been referred to as the dean of Broward black elected officials because of his remarkable leadership and role as one of the founders of that group. He knew his constituents astoundingly well, and would often complain in jest that he was going broke buying flowers for funerals.

Pat was also recognized throughout the State as a leader and spokesperson for minority involvement in government and business. During his time as mayor of Pompano Beach, the city hired the first black fire chief and first black city clerk in Broward County. Pat initiated the city ordinance to promote minority small business concerns, and along with two others, helped to create the first minority business enterprise program for Broward County government. His concern for equality had developed from an early age; as a student at Blanche Ely, where he was voted to lead his class from 5th through 12th grades, he led a student boycott of classes when an annual gathering of the county's three black high schools was canceled.

In addition to his many professional achievements, Pat Larkins took an active role in countless public service, social, and religious organizations. He was a life member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), served on the Broward County Boys and Girls Club corporate board, the Juvenile Justice Intensive Halfway House, and the Florida black caucus local elected officials, and was a longtime member of Hopewell Baptist Church. He was a founding member of the Urban League board, as well as a leader in the Superintendents' Commission on Public Education, National Black Mayors' Conference, and U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Madam Speaker, through all of these roles, Pat had an indelible impact on the well-being of his community. He made profound contributions in the area of housing, working tirelessly to ensure safe and adequate housing was available to all. Under his leadership, Pompano Beach recently demolished a 140-home development that had been rundown and falling apart and relocated the owners to a modern development of affordable homes on an even swap arrangement at a considerable

cost savings to the city. Over the past 5 years, he led the city in providing financial and other assistance that has resulted in the erection of more than 800 affordable multifamily units.

Madam Speaker, although Pat's life has come to an end, his legacy will live on for generations to come. He will be remembered for his patience and generosity, characteristics which enabled him to improve the lives of all those who knew him. Pat was my friend of 46 years, he was a Renaissance man and I am proud and fortunate to have known him.

CONGRATULATING JAMES J.
KEELER, 2009 HONOREE OF THE
SOCIETY OF THE FRIENDLY
SONS OF ST. PATRICK OF
LACKAWANNA COUNTY

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to James J. Keeler, of Clarks Summit, Lackawanna County, who was selected to receive the prestigious "President's Award" from the Society of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of Lackawanna County for the year 2009.

Mr. Keeler has proudly and successfully served the people of Lackawanna County for many years in a wide variety of ways.

He has served as administrator of the Social Security Administration. He was the first chairman of the Lackawanna County Multi-Purpose Stadium Authority. And he has been a political science instructor at Marywood University and at the University of Scranton.

A native of the City of Scranton, Mr. Keeler began his career in Harrisburg in 1969 as an assistant to then Auditor General Robert P. Casey.

He joined the Social Security Administration in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1971 as a legislative analyst and served on the task force that implemented the Supplemental Security Income, SSI, program. He also worked in Washington DC on Capitol Hill at the Congressional Research Service.

In 1976, Mr. Keeler and his wife, the former Elaine O'Malley, of Scranton, returned to Lackawanna County where they raised their three children: Jimmy, Ellen and Paul in Clarks Summit.

In 1991, Mr. Keeler was recognized by the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services with a national Honor Award for an innovative outreach program that found over 200 low income aged and disabled Lackawanna County residents who were eligible for the SSI program.

Mr. Keeler is the author of "Our Team! Insights From the Publicly Owned Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Red Barons," a book based on his doctoral dissertation at the University of Southern California's School of Public Administration.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Keeler for his many years of service to the Lackawanna County community. His commitment to public service has vastly improved the quality of life for many throughout northeastern Pennsylvania and, for that, Mr. Keeler has earned our respect and admiration.